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AN UPDATE FOR PARAMEDICS AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) STAKEHOLDERS IN PEEL BY PEEL REGIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICES

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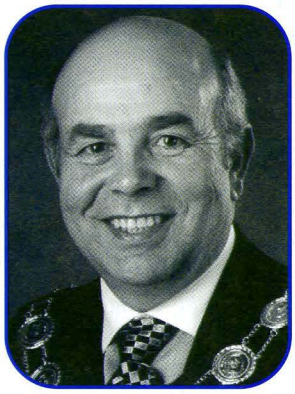
A Message from the Chair



Emil Kolb–Regional Chair

I am extremely pleased that Regional Council, on July 13, 2000, approved our proposal for Land Ambulance service in the Region of Peel.

Even though it has been a long and involved process, it produced a proposal that will improve land ambulance service in our Region. The process has also helped our staff, as well as members of Regional Council, to obtain a sound understanding of this vital service to our community.

I would like to congratulate Peel's new business partners in this endeavour, the District of Halton and Mississauga Ambulance Services Limited and the Dufferin Caledon Health Care Corporation. Together we are the custodians of Peel's land ambulance service. I know I can speak for our private sector partners when I say we plan on delivering the best possible service to the citizens of the Region of Peel.

In addition to welcoming aboard the new regime, I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved in providing this service prior to January 1, 2001. In particular, the Bolton District Voluntary Ambulance Association and the Lee Ambulance Services for their exemplary service to the citizens of the Region of Peel over the last 39 and 31 years respectively.

Emil Kolb

Emil Kolb
Regional Chair

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Region of Peel
Working for you

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A Message from the CAO

Roger Maloney – CAO

As you will read elsewhere is this issue of *Code 8*, Regional Council approved the creation of Peel Regional Ambulance Services on July 13, 2000. This decision represents a landmark in the Region's history, and demonstrates Council's commitment to the health and safety of our communities.

As Peel Regional Ambulance Services moves steadily forward to its service start date of January 1, 2001, we are continuing to strive to form productive partnerships with providers and hospitals to ensure that excellent service continues to be provided to Region of Peel residents.

Our aim is to enrich the quality of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Peel through the use of experienced operators, and the addition of more vehicles, bases and, most important, additional skilled and dedicated paramedics. We will also continue to lobby the Province to provide more system funding, and to devolve dispatch to us—a key component in the provision of exemplary service.

Together, we will work as a team to raise the service standard levels, in a continuous improvement environment—always striving to provide the best service possible in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

I look forward with anticipation to the next few months as we prepare for the launch of Peel Regional Ambulance Services.

Roger Maloney
Chief Administrative Officer, Region of Peel

Council Approves Service Contracts

Regional Council, at its meeting on July13, approved contracts with two land ambulance operators to begin providing services in Peel Region beginning January 1, 2001.

Peel Regional Ambulance Services will consist of the following service providers, pursuant to the three-year contracts approved by Council:

- *District of Halton and Mississauga Ambulance Service Ltd.*
- *Dufferin-Caledon Health Care Corporation*

"Enhancing the quality of service was the most important consideration when the Committee was evaluating the submissions and preparing its recommendations," said Paul Palleschi, Regional Councillor and Co-Chair of the Land Ambulance RFP (Request for Proposals) Evaluation Committee. "Residents of Peel will see the results of modern planning techniques and performance measures as the Region manages the ambulance system to meet the needs of our growing population."

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What this means to you

When the Region assumes responsibility for the delivery of land ambulance services on January 1, 2001, residents can expect to see an increased number of ambulance stations, more ambulance vehicles on the road, and more paramedics in the community.

Last fall, Regional Council approved a proposal to increase the number of Advanced Care Paramedics in Peel. Council's decision establishes a target of one Advanced Care Paramedic on every two-person ambulance crew in the Region by the end of year three of the contracts.

"Council approval of these service contracts is a most significant step in achieving our goal to elevate and standardize the level of ambulance service across the Region," said Joseph Moore, General Manager of Ambulance and Emergency Programs for the Region of Peel. "The Region is now that much closer in its efforts to establish an ambulance service that will operate seamlessly as an integral part of the emergency service network in Peel, to provide improved response times and a higher standard of patient care."

Contract Highlights

The Region's proposed ambulance program features:

- Seamless delivery of service across the Region by all operators
- Increase in annual hours of service across the Region from 116,000 to 144,000 over three years
- Introduction of three additional stations over the next three years
- Three new frontline vehicles and additional spare units to ensure ongoing availability of emergency response
- 65 per cent of all paramedics trained to the Advanced Care (P2) level
- Improved response times to meet medically relevant standards
- Ongoing review of system performance by Regional staff
- Region will have the ability to adjust service levels if required

Details of the Regional Coverage Plan for Ambulance Services

The Regional Coverage Plan for Ambulance Services sets out the basic resources and strategy for ambulance deployment in the Region of Peel. Under current legislation enacted by the Province, the Region of Peel is obligated to ensure that the Ambulance Emergency Response Times that will occur during 2001 will be at least the same or better than the 1996 reported results. In addition to this minimum baseline standard, the Region of Peel has considered medical standards and community expectations and as a result is seeking under nine minute response time in urban areas and under 15 minutes in rural areas 90 per cent of the time as our objective.

John Byard

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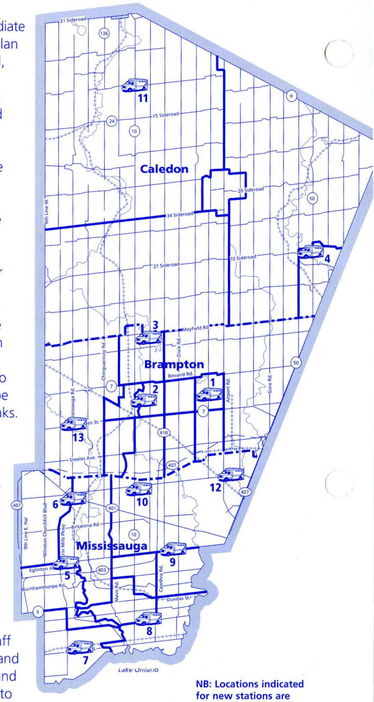
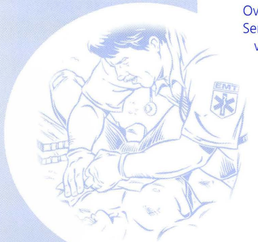
Effective January 1, 2001, the immediate changes in the Regional coverage plan will see an increase of an additional, 19,000 vehicle hours in ambulance service. This is created by operating new stations in Caledon Village and Malton, with 24-hour staffing. The ambulance call demand analysis demonstrated that these areas were understaffed and when ambulance service was required, vehicles from other areas were required to service these calls.

This process not only created longer response times, but also took away from the ambulance availability in these other areas in order to service the calls. In addition, adjustments in shift length, start and stop times, and day of the week scheduling also allow for appropriate resources to be assigned when the call demand peaks.

In the first year of the contract there will be 12 ambulance bases (two in Caledon, three in Brampton, and seven in Mississauga). These bases will operate 20 ambulances throughout the Region, and it is anticipated that through these resources and appropriate Coverage Planning and Vehicle Deployment, the Response Time objectives will be met. Through monitoring and review, Regional staff will ensure optimal response times and vehicle availability are maintained, and will determine if any changes need to be made to the Coverage Plan throughout the coming months.



NB: Locations indicated for new stations are approximate



Over the next five years, the planned enhancements to the Regional Ambulance Service also include an additional ambulance base in Brampton, 34,000 additional vehicle staffing hours to accommodate growth, development and implementation of a Region-wide Advanced Care Paramedic Program, and a dynamic and fluid ambulance deployment model to meet the needs of the Region of Peel's expected growth and changing demographics.

Specific details on the Regional Coverage Plan can be obtained by accessing the Region of Peel, Ambulance and Emergency Programs Web site at www.region.peel.on.calemergncy/land_amblindex.htm

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Equipment and Supplies — *sustaining the new service*

In the previous issue of *Code 8*, we described how our ambulance fleet would be maintained and managed after the Region assumes responsibility on January 1, 2001. Another key component of the Region's program will be our procedure for providing the necessary equipment and supplies to sustain our new service.

Kathryn Cameron

Ambulance and Emergency Programs staff is in the process of developing procedures for the acquisition, distribution, management and control of all medical and non-medical supplies, equipment and medications necessary for the provision of ambulance services. Responsibility for the procurement of medical supplies and equipment rests primarily with the Region. The service providers will be responsible for non-medical items such as cleaning supplies and uniforms. The hospitals will, as always, provide necessary medications.

Regardless of the entity responsible for the acquisition of these items, the Region's goal is to develop a program that ensures the most efficient and cost-effective use of supplies and equipment. This program will ultimately lower overall medication and supply usage costs, streamline the existing medication and supply distribution process, and enhance access to medication and supply utilization data.

Community Awareness — *a key component*

The assumption date for ambulance service in Peel is rapidly approaching, and excitement is growing. Once the Service Agreements have been signed, the work of creating the new service begins. As part of this process, we will look closely at community awareness of the Service, and the role played by our paramedics.

Lorraine Bradbury

At the Region of Peel, we believe public recognition of this critical service is important. In this regard, several initiatives have already begun, such as the development of the *Code 8* newsletter, and the design of a crest and logo for the service. Valuable input from the paramedic community into the creation of the crest has been received, and we welcome further suggestions from you on other issues affecting the human quality of our Region's service.

It is you who resuscitates the little child who accidentally falls into the neighbour's pool, who cares for the elderly person who has fallen down the stairs, and who looks after the heart and stroke victims and those involved in countless other incidents. It is the paramedics of Peel who are the heart and soul of the service.

I invite your feedback on how you, as paramedics, would like to see this critical service portrayed to the people you serve. I welcome any thoughts, ideas and suggestions you can provide. Over the past several months, I have had the pleasure of talking with many of you, either in person, or via e-mail, and I look forward to talking to more of you in the future.

It is our hope that we together we can raise the community's awareness of the invaluable service provided by our paramedics in the Region of Peel.

Please send me your comments at bradburyl@region.peel.on.ca

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GM's Comments — *Moving Into the Future*

Council's selection on July 13, 2000 of the future operators of Peel Regional Ambulance Services marked the beginning of a new era of Emergency Medical Services in the Region of Peel. Council's choice reflected our confidence in the capability of two highly experienced existing providers of service to meet the needs of our residents after the transition of this service on January 1, 2001.

Joseph Moore

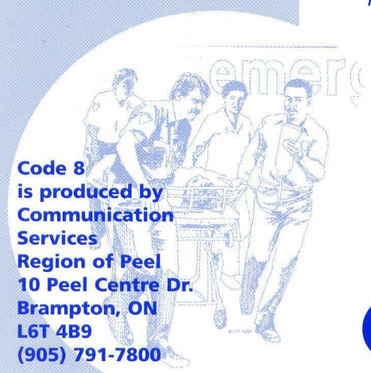
Equally important was Council's endorsement of the Region's proposed coverage plan, which includes the addition of new vehicles, bases and nineteen thousand additional hours of service in the first year of operations alone. Council also adopted a universally-accessible *Advanced Life Support* level of care as the standard for our Region.

These landmark decisions permit us to move forward in our partnerships towards the creation of a service which will be second to none in the Province of Ontario. The next five months will represent an extremely busy time for all of us. In addition to assisting our operators in preparing to expand their services, the Region's Ambulance and Emergency Programs team will be very active in developing our Quality Assurance Program, completing the Request for Proposals for fleet maintenance and consumable supplies, formalizing our linkages with CACC and Base Hospitals and creating a Land Ambulance Advisory Committee to ensure that all stakeholders, including paramedics, have the opportunity to provide input into the system.

My team and I look forward to meeting these challenges and we will have the opportunity to get better acquainted with many of you, including those whom we have come to know through the many telephone calls and e-mail communications that we have received during the past eight months.

Through the many years that I have worked with Peel's emergency service providers, I have come to know first hand the dedication and professionalism of the paramedic community. I am personally proud and honoured to have the opportunity to work in partnership with that community and our operators to help shape the future of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Peel.

Joseph Moore is the General Manager of Ambulance and Emergency Programs for the Region of Peel.



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If you have any suggestions for this newsletter, or if you have any questions you would like addressed, please send them via e-mail to moorej@region.peel.on.ca.

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